



Spanish company takes over Harland & Wolff

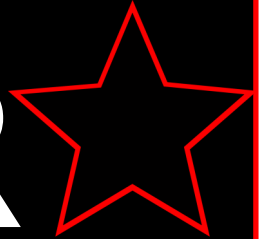


Let hell break out!



Derry councillors appeal to the Vatican!

BLACK STAR



ANTI-POVERTY

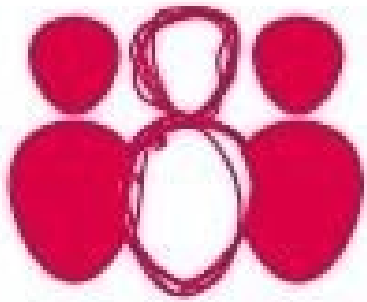


AN ANARCHIST STRATEGY

The Committee on the Administration of Justice (CAJ) was in court at the end of last month taking a case against the Department of the Communities (led by the DUP's Gordon Lyons), the Executive Office and the First and Deputy First Ministers for failing to provide an anti-poverty strategy. The CAJ said that this had been promised by Stormont a decade ago and had failed to materialise though the government's lawyer claimed it had only been started when the new executive came together this time last year. The CAJ's case was supported by a group called the Equality Coalition, which includes UNISON, Barnardo's NI and the Northern Ireland Anti-Poverty Network among over 170 other NGOs, many of which are employers. The court case heard complaints that the government's failure to adopt a programme for tackling poverty meant that child poverty, child payments and the establishment of a child poverty commission was still not in place. Stormont basically appealed for more time, claimed they were working on the issues and would have something ready soon. The judge seemed to agree and has reserved judgement in the case for now, obviously to give them more time.

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Managing or destroying Poverty?



NIAPN

The CAJ's court case is centrally about faith in government to change things positively for people's lives here.

Obviously, there's the understanding that Stormont may struggle to deliver these things, but generally there is a left-liberal hope that the cretinous gang of self-serving sectarian fuckers in charge here can be nudged into some progressive change. Human rights and environmental protections have tended to come first in demands that Stormont get to work on creating a strategy (which many people seem to believe they can then be held to), though anti-poverty has been to the fore as well.

The Equality Coalition NI goes back to 1996 and combines trade unions and community and voluntary sector organisations in the main as a combined lobby to pressure the politicians. Although they have held occasional protests, their own main 'strategy' has been to produce reports, many of which, it's only fair to say, have been really well done, supported now by a legal process to try and bring the weight of the law upon the legislators.

Of course, we know that this is a futile process and is not one that can change anything even if the 'correct' political forces replace the wankers on the hill. As working class people, who have ourselves, many of us, grown up with and experienced poverty, most of it multi-generational, we're not convinced that bourgeois politicians have our interests at heart or wish to seriously tackle the economic system that has poverty, inequality and deprivation written into its DNA.

Moreover, is it really in the interests of any of the political parties here or anywhere else to destroy that system? The fiction

that sustains them in power is based on the idea that they are servants of the public responsive to pressure from below and keen to appeal to all potential voters. We know that in actual fact, they don't give a fuck as in reality they operate on the basis of the 'us and them' politics of this place and in service to an economic system they don't want to destroy as it pays their wages, but the wider sense that they've stuff to do for us, keeps eejits asking them to do just that.

Lobbyists

Like Britain, Ireland and many other countries, a well-organised range of lobbyists operates here. Led by a handsomely salaried professional class of executives, their job is to make claims and demands on behalf of others, often the working class, for jobs, housing, healthcare and education. Many of these groups are in the community and voluntary sector, where trade union membership is almost as low as the worker's wages while the aforementioned 'chief executives' are on substantially more.

These groups appeal directly to Stormont, both for themselves as well as for the opportunity to influence policy and policymakers. No-one asks to what extent they really represent us and whilst they are not our class enemies, they are in a service relationship with government that not only undermines their independence, but makes them, like the politicians, unwilling to address the fundamental causes of inequality and poverty.

Among the groups in the meta-lobby, the Equality Coalition, are the Bryson Group, Business and Professional Women,

Northern Ireland, and the Conference of Religious of Ireland-Northern Ireland. These are not organisations that seek fundamental change or even serious reform, in fact they are for the most part at the cutting edge of many of the socio-economic inequalities they claim to want to eradicate. However, the fact that so many groups are a part of this giant amalgamation of 'grassroots' organisations shows how facile, self-serving and ineffectual the lobby industry is here.

We're not claiming that they're all useless fuckers propping up an inherently reactionary system, but we *are* saying that unless and until they are willing to acknowledge what our Marxists used to call the 'underlying reality' and aid the rest of us in taking an axe to the economic root of inequality in capitalism, then they are part of the problem. We are not about managing poverty, ameliorating the worst effects of inequality and reforming how bourgeois politicians deal with systemic disparities between the wealthy minority and the rest of us. These are the things we intend to completely destroy on the way to the emancipation of our class.

Remember the 'Make Poverty History' moment back in 2005 (that's fuckin' two decades ago!), when global NGOs declared a 'war' on poverty? There were marches, sit-ins and sit-downs, placards and platforms featuring celebrities, even 'Live 8', the attempted re-launch of Live Aid in the wake of the G8 meeting at Gleneagles in Scotland that year. Some Black Bloc wans burned a few bins in Edinburgh and



everyone lost their shit. There were even those little white wristbands (awareness bands, I think they're called), to show you were 'aware' of poverty. A later investigation revealed that the awareness bands were made in a Chinese sweat-shop. Our answer back then was to 'make capitalism history' and that remains the case today. You'll not be surprised to hear that poverty was *not* made history.

The working class, our class, need effective organisation and direct action to overcome the poverty that plagues our communities and whilst mutual aid and individual community and workplace struggles can make an important impact, it will require mass revolutionary action at the point of production to fundamentally oust capitalism and the poverty and inequality it creates and sustains across the globe.

SPANISH STATE TO THE RESCUE?



The great Christmas rescue is how much of the mass media depicted the buy-out of Harland and Wolff by the Spanish state-owned company, Navantia. The deal was completed last month and was even picked up on by our comrades in the Federacion Anarquista in Spain, who concentrated on the defence contracts for the Royal Navy that the yardsmen are likely to be involved in.

Navantia have been involved in decades-long disputes with workers in Spain and were seriously affected by the mass strikes in Cadiz back in 2021 when tens of thousands of metalworkers walked out in a nine-day action over pay and cost of living issues, only to be fucked over by the reformist trade unions, the UGT and CCOO.

As our comrades in the Cadiz CNT-AIT recalled, fights in the shipyards back in the late 1980s stopped the systematic dismantling of the ship-building industry.



That was down to the workers, of course, not the bosses and shareholders, and just because Navantia is state-owned should not fool anyone that they are less rapacious than other gang of capitalist bastards.

There will be fights to come and we hope to learn from our comrades in Spain's dockyards how they fought and continue to fight in struggle against Navantia. One positive element is the opportunity for fraternity and solidarity between workers here and workers there, not only in the cause of better pay and conditions and security of employment, but in the advancement of a better world out of the ruins of the old one.



Northern Anarcho-Syndicalist News from Organise!

Meanwhile... in Derry and Strabane



Derry City & Strabane
District Council
Comhairle
Chathair Dhoire &
Cheantar an tSraitha Báin
Derry Citty & Strabane
District Council

Took the train from Ballymena up to Derry the other day and after a wee walk over the peace bridge and a few wonky pints on Waterloo Street, I grabbed the local paper only to see a story about the council and a deid nun. I thought we had some serious bible-bashing nutjobs in the town of the seven towers, but this took the biscuit. The council were debating, and ultimately fuckin' agreed, to support attempts to make a local nun, killed in an earthquake in a school in South America (nobody ever mentions the weans that were killed with her), a saint. Apparently the decision was unanimous with the DUP even supporting it and People Before Profit councillor, Shaun Harkin, deciding to abstain!

Officially recognised by the Catholic Church as a 'Servant of God', at a recent ceremony in Spain, the Vatican is being urged to investigate claims of miracles attributed to her. Obviously, to balance things out, we should get the Council to nominate a servant of Satan, Pennywise maybe given the new 'It' film is subtitled 'Welcome to Derry', and he's a fuckin' clown!

CUTS... CUTS... CUTS...



Queens University has announced a voluntary redundancy scheme that will axe 270 jobs - around 5% of its workforce. At the same time the University is opening a multi-million pound campus in India. UCU reps have called the scheme scandalous, whether action will be taken against the cuts remains to be seen.



Around 90 staff at telecoms giant BT's Riverside Tower in Belfast are also facing redundancy. They will be cut from the 2,000 people who work there within the wider BT Group, which includes EE, BT Business and Openreach.



Announcements come on top of continuing redundancies at Fibrus broadband. It looks like 2025 is shaping up to being another year of increased suffering for the working class while the rich continue to get richer.

BOTHER WITH BORDERS...



So Hilary Benn refused to apply the 'Stormont break' and surveys put support for a united Ireland on the increase.

The 'break' was a key component of the Windsor Framework that gave assurances that there would be no hardening of the Irish sea border between Northern Ireland and the rest of the UK. The Framework saw the DUP return to power-sharing with Sinn Féin a year ago. While a commitment from Labour to keep all of the UK in line with the EU may help allay unionist fears there is growing support for an all-Ireland state.

A border poll would still be defeated in the North and that does not look like it will change any time soon. We believe that framing this as 'Irish unity' is dangerously misleading. We are not particularly interested in the creation of a nation state and government for the whole island that will simply shift a

border. We have always opposed colonialism, Unionist oppression and sectarian warfare because the type of unity we are interested in is class unity. Unity of the majority working class population of this island, these islands and globally against capitalist exploitation, state oppression, patriarchy and racism.

The working class will never be served by any government and we must be prepared to face whatever new arrangement is established on a class basis. In the meantime we will continue to struggle against discrimination, oppression and exploitation and to build a revolutionary working class movement capable of scrapping the system of global capitalism, imperialist competition, militarism and war and replacing it with a society based on direct democracy and meeting the needs of all.



Trump Inauguration C*nts of a feather...



This article is originally from the current issue of *Class War*, the bulletin of Organise! members in the South of Ireland.

In November, Organise! IWA issued a statement regarding Conor McGregor's guilty verdict for sexually assaulting Nikita Hand. The outcome of this case has seen McGregor hit where it hurts, with many retailers refusing to sell his Forged Irish Stout. Proximo Spirits, who own Proper No 12, have also ceased to use the former MMA fighter's name or likeness in the promotion of their product.

And trouble continues to follow Conor McGregor, as it has emerged that he will now face another civil lawsuit. This next case follows the alleged sexual assault of a woman at a basketball game in the United States back in 2023.

The former fighter was also photographed at a pre-inauguration rally for incoming US president Donald Trump. The photo, captioned "we are so back" on McGregor's X account, shows him posing next to Reform UK leader Nigel Farage.



Which brings on to Trump's inauguration. Having recently decided to completely roll back on fact checking on Meta's platforms, Mark Zuckerberg joined other tech billionaires like Jeff Bezos and Elon Musk, alongside celebrities like Joe Rogan, Dana White and Jon Voight to witness Trump being sworn in. During the same ceremony which saw Elon Musk openly Nazi saluting those present, Trump claimed to have been "saved by God" following his recent assassination attempt.

Trump later proceeded to announce a number of executive orders, obviously keen to bring in as many changes as he could while the American public were too distracted by the days events to notice.

Among these, he promised his government would only recognise two genders. Other plans include scrapping the Green New Deal, significantly increasing drilling for oil and gas, and putting stricter controls in place to curb immigration. This latter move has already seen a wider roll-out of immigration raids across the States.



By Friday the 7th of February Trump had signed more than 50 Executive Orders.

This is just a taste of them. There isn't room for all of it but it gives a terrifying enough picture of a reactionary, conservative, business agenda.

He announced economic tariffs on Mexico, Canada and China. Banning transgender people from serving in the military. Mobilising the military to protect USA borders against 'unlawful mass migration.' Directing federal agencies to use the term "sex," not "gender," and to ensure federal personnel records and government-issued documents, such as passports, "accurately reflect the holder's sex." Directing agencies to ensure federal funds "do not promote gender ideology." Barring federal funds from being used for gender transition health care in prisons and mandates "privacy in intimate spaces" to ensure that single-sex spaces are designated by sex and not gender identity. Expanding the list of terrorist organisations. Ending all diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility programs, policies and mandates across the federal government, revising union contracts and employment practices to end them. It also directs the government to terminate all positions related to equality and inclusion. Declared a 90-day pause in U.S. "foreign development assistance" followed by a full-scale review of all programs. *Restoring Names That Honor American Greatness*, like the Gulf of America and Mount McKinley. Restoring the death penalty. Defends the use of capital punishment, "where possible" and directing the attorney general to seek the death penalty if a law enforcement officer is murdered or if someone in the U.S. commits a capital crime. Asks the attorney general to study the 37 death row inmates whose sentences Biden commuted and make sure they are "imprisoned in conditions consistent with the monstrosity of their crimes and the threats they pose," as well as check to see if these inmates are eligible to be charged with state capital offenses. Maximising the development of Alaska and eliminating emissions standards to 'unleash American energy'...

INVEST NI GENOCIDE



Invest NI are usually in the spotlight for their track record of funding slash and grab cheapskate employers after a bung and a low wage workforce. Now they have outdone themselves in investing millions of pounds of public money in 3 firms that make parts for the F-35 bombers used to commit genocide in Gaza.

Invest NI, 'our' regional development agency has subsidised RLC Engineering Group Ltd, Moyola Precision Engineering and Survitect to the tune of millions. All 3 of these companies make parts and equipment for the F-35. While Israel is not the only country to use F-35s a recent court case focuses on the fact that public money has been subsidising the Israeli assault on Gaza. The high intensity use of the bombers has undoubtedly saw a spike in profits for the companies to go with their bung from Invest NI.

The F-35 has primarily been used by Israel in Gaza and in other recent airstrikes such

as on Syria. It has also been used in the middle-east by the United States Airforce.

An upcoming hearing challenging the government's decision to continue granting licences to sell F-35 fighter jet components and other weapons to Israel would **not** stop Invest NI giving financial 'help' to companies that make them. It would mean they could not export parts for F-35s used by Israel. We don't know much but this sounds like just the sort of legality that states can work around, and even if they can't the statistics below show that this isn't enough.

Current (which means already out of date) figures for child deaths in war stand at 3,100 in 14 years in Iraq; 12,000 in 11 years in Syria; 3,700 in 7 years in Yemen; over 600 in 4 years in Myanmar; over 520 in 2 years in Ukraine; and over 20,000 in 1 year (with another 20,000 missing) in Palestine. ...



Northern Anarcho-Syndicalist News from Organise!

“LET HELL BREAK OUT”



The Israel-Hamas ceasefires had barely 'started' and the IDF killed more Palestinians in Gaza, then in the West Bank resulting in the displacement of 40,000 Palestinians. The release of Palestinian prisoners was delayed and Hamas responded by announcing that they were delaying further hostage releases until Israel complied with the ceasefire. Israel has denied that airstrikes and gunfire have 'hindered' the return of Palestinian refugees.

Trump immediately weighed in giving Israel a green light for further, worse, carnage. He declared:

...if all of the hostages aren't returned by Saturday at 12 o'clock, I think its an appropriate time. I would say cancel it and all bets are off. Let hell break out... if they are not returned, all of them, not in dribs and drabs, not 2 and 1 and 3 and 4 and 2. Saturday at 12 o'clock and after that I would say all hell is gonna break out.

In an intervention that is the definition of pouring oil on the flames Trump has also reiterated his threat to turn the Gaza Strip into a 'riviera' and to relocate Palestinians to Egypt and Jordan. He has threatened to withhold aid from Egypt and Jordan if they do not comply with his scheme and did not accept those being relocated.

Netanyahu has not contradicted Trump. He has threatened that if the hostages are not all returned by the POTUS deadline the ceasefire will be off and the Israeli military will "return to intense fighting until Hamas is finally defeated".



Council workers and pay

Pay claims of £3000 for council workers have been launched by Unite, the GMB and UNISON for 2025-26.

Last year, workers were given just 2.5% when inflation was double that (so, in effect, they secured a pay cut), after years of slumping wages and rising costs. It's a picture repeated across the public sector, with civil service workers here in the Roads Service, Forestry, Rivers Agency, Environment Agency, and Fisheries all offered between 3 and 6% over the next two years. It seems likely that the employers will push back and ballots for industrial action will commence soon after. Obviously, Conor Murphy is off to the Free State talking shop known as the Seanad for his retirement to be replaced by Caoimhe Archibald, who is clearly a stalking horse for Michelle should the Shinnors decide on another re-shuffle of the top brass. Of course, it matters fuck all for the workers as their attempts to creatively work the creaking economic system here will always end in the 'a big boy made me do it' excuse.



Elsewhere, the head teachers' union, the National Association of Head Teachers (NAHT), now pouring over their 5.5% offer have pushed back against the strings attached, which basically required them to give assurances on an avoidance of all future strike action. That's certainly encouraging but it doesn't automatically suggest the deal will not be accepted and shows how the politicians are preparing for further strike action across our schools which they hope the 'leaders' will resist.

Sick of Capitalism



A new report has seen a big reduction in "economic inactivity" in the working age population in the Republic of Ireland over the last decade. It's down to 17.1% among 20-64 year olds. The economically inactive are those in the population who are not looking for work and it includes the sick, disabled and those who have caring responsibilities. So while those who actually do carry out unpaid labour are included the megarich - by pretending they have jobs - aren't.

In the North however the economic inactivity rate in the same age range is 22.5%. That's between a fifth and a quarter of the population - half of them blaming sickness or disability on their inability to work. In the South less than a third claim economic inactivity is down to illness. The Ulster University Economic Policy Centre (fancy!) and Dublin City University excluded 16-19 year olds from the research as they were too 'workshy' while some explained the discrepancy North and South as being the result of a growing number of people becoming totally sick of the previously lauded Protestant work ethic. And the absence of Catholic guilt about ditching it.

Just Books Publishing



Just Books Publishing, set up by the Just Books Collective, has so far published its first two titles.



The first is a reprint of Gregori Maximoff's *Constructive Anarchism*, to mark the 100th year of existence of the International Workers Association (IWA) the Anarcho-Syndicalist

international founded in Berlin in 1922.

isbn 9781739723705

£7.99



The second title, now with a new cover, is Nick Heath's *The Idea*.

Anarchist Communism: Past, Present and Future - a welcome and new comprehensive work on anarchist communism,

this book seeks to rehabilitate the current of anarchist-communism. To make it better known and understood.

...a good substantial book, and much needed. Lucidly written, it provides a rich brew of engaging discussions of the 'Idea' (anarchist communism as a political philosophy), interesting vignettes of many individual anarchists, and a great historical account of the many anarchist communist organisations over the past 150 years...

(Brian Morris on *The Idea*)

isbn 9781739723712

£15.00

Available from:

<https://organiseanarchistsireland.com/shop/>

Get Involved: Help Build A Working Class Alternative.



Organise! is an anarcho-syndicalist group in Ireland which is affiliated to the International Worker's Association as 'friends of' section. We take inspiration from the self directed struggles of working-class people, and particularly the history and tradition of struggle epitomised by the IWA - the anarcho-syndicalist international. Our history goes back to the original formation of Organise! by the Ballymena and Antrim Anarchist Groups in 1985. We are a small, but growing, group of ordinary working class people who are fed up with being fucked about by the profit system, fed up with seeing our communities and workplaces torn apart by racism, patriarchy, nationalism and sectarianism, and sick of a greedy few getting rich off everyone else's backs.

We are actively working to promote solidarity in opposition to capitalism, the state, patriarchy and all other forms of oppression and hierarchy. The way we organise reflects the free society we want to create: one based on voluntary association, democratic participation and self-management.

Our members are workers, claimants, students, migrants, unemployed and other working-class people committed to building a libertarian communist union movement actively opposed to all forms of oppression and exploitation.

We want to improve everyday conditions for ourselves and other working class people, but we also struggle for the revolutionary transformation that can create a free and equal society, one based on mutual aid and co-operation. Sound crazy? Maybe it does, but in an era in which it is easier to imagine the end of the world than the end of capitalism the continuation of the present system is even crazier...

The current system isn't working – ill-health, stress and overwork



affect more and more people while others are flung on the dole; for increasing amounts of workers it is precarity, zero hours contracts and the stress of being unable to plan or budget our lives; we live in a world of plentiful resources yet millions starve; some people make vast fortunes just because they own companies, land, property or natural resources, but those of us who create the wealth, work the land and build the properties are left struggling to survive; politicians tell us there's no money – not for wages, benefits or local amenities, but there's always plenty for war; both locally and globally the gap between the richest and the poorest sections of society has never been so great; instead of a war on poverty they've got a war on 'benefit fraud', while the same system that creates war, poverty and environmental destruction stigmatises, imprisons and deports the resultant refugees.

We don't think these things are inevitable or coincidental, we think they are related to capitalism – an economic system defined by wage slavery and the accumulation of profit out of other people's work. So we support all workers against their bosses in demanding higher wages and better conditions. We try to intervene practically to support workers engaged in disputes and are also active in our own workplaces and communities. Not only against exploitation but against the multiple oppressions faced by members of the working class in all our diversity.

But it's not just a question of trying to struggle by in a world of exploitation and oppression; we look to a future where workers control production and society in their own interests. And unlike some people who claim to oppose capitalism, we don't want to be a new set of leaders and we refuse to be led by anyone else. We advocate direct democracy in the workplace and through the commune in our communities – working in federation to ensure that the needs of all are met and that no-one is ever again in a position to oppress or exploit another human being.

If you are interested in these ideas, we'd encourage you to explore our website and consider getting involved.

We currently have members in Belfast, Cork, Derry, Dublin, Lisburn, Monaghan, Newry, Newtownabbey and Portadown and are building the organisation on the basis of active involvement and participation. We have a new Local in Formation in South Ulster. We aren't interested in meaningless 'paper' membership so you can't join by filling in an online form and bunging us a few quid. Every member is an active member.

To talk to us about joining get the ball rolling, check out our website at <https://organiseanarchistsireland.com> and send an email to: organiseasi@gmail.com

